



Newslink

October 2022

Community Living St. Marys and Area
"A community where everyone belongs."



Community Living St. Marys and Area invites you to the annual **Holiday Dinner and Dance** Friday Dec 09 St. Marys Golf and Country Club (Invitation enclosed)

RSVP by Nov 14th to Central Admin



Christmas Closure:

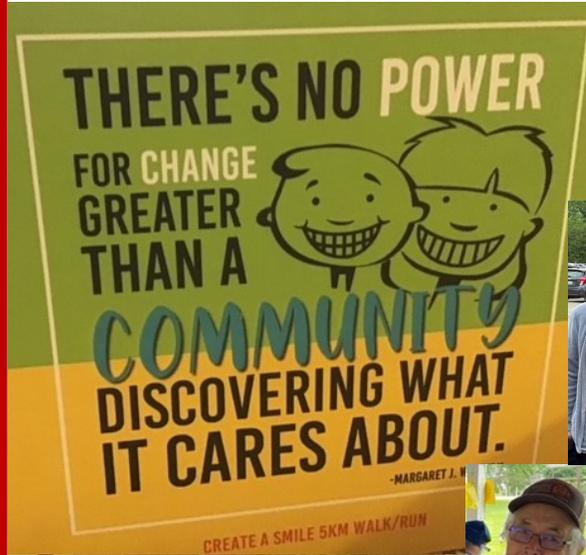
The JPC (office) will be closed:

Mon, Dec 26
(Boxing Day)

Tues, Dec 27
(In lieu of Christmas Day)

Mon, Jan 2
(In lieu of New Year's Day)

2022 Create A Smile Over \$18,700 raised!!



Community Living St. Marys and Area would like to say thank you to everyone who supported our 18th Annual "Create A Smile" 5 km Walkathon on June 5, 2022.

This fundraising event that is organized in partnership with the Create A Smile Foundation gathered in person after two years! This year the money will be designated to support security of home, activities for increased participation in community events and additional accessibility features in our parks. A portion of the money will also go to support an organization called "Inclusion Europe" and their efforts to help people with developmental disabilities and their families living in Ukraine. The event would not be possible without the generosity of the community, families, friends and sponsors!

A special thank you goes out to the Muir and Rossetti families for their 18-year commitment to this annual event!

Strategic Plan—Advocacy— Housing



Community Living St. Marys and Area will soon have a new strategic plan! The board hired a consultant last year to help gather input from people supported, families and employees through focus groups and a survey. That part was completed by the spring of 2022 and now the board is meeting with the consultant to finalize the plan. The next step will be adding practical strategies to meet our new goals! This new plan will provide the strategic directions and priorities for the work we do from 2023 to 2026. Stay tuned for more information coming in the next few months!!

Light It Up! For NDEAM

Did you know Oct 20 is approaching, and it's 'light it up' day?
Stratford City Council hereby proclaims October 20, 2022 as "Light It Up! For NDEAM Day" in the City of Stratford in recognition of National Disability Employment Awareness Month (NDEAM) and the many ways people who have a disability contribute to businesses and communities across Canada!



Stand Up For the Canada Disability Benefit

On September 20 Members of Parliament return to the House of Commons to begin debate on the Second Reading of Bill C-22, an Act to reduce poverty and to support the financial security of persons with disabilities by establishing the Canada disability benefit.

This historic legislation aims to reduce poverty among working-age Canadians with disabilities by providing a nationwide monthly disability benefit payment. While many Canadians are currently experiencing the struggles of a budget stretched too thin, people with disabilities are unfortunately familiar with this reality, with the current inflation and financial insecurity only making their situation worse. In Canada, more than 70 percent of adults with an intellectual disability live in poverty. The income support they currently receive is already inadequate and that financial support is being stretched further and further in the current environment. With inflation at its highest level in decades, many disability support amounts haven't risen with inflation and are lagging further and further behind. Inclusion Canada and other advocacy groups is urging the public to phone or email their local MPs to show support for the bill and to fast track its passage.

The Board of CLSMA has written letters of support and encourages people supported, their families and employees to join the movement. If you need any help on how to contact your MP or more information, please contact Jennifer Leslie jleslie@clstmarys.ca or (519)284-1400 ext. 228.

Good Housing News

With the lack of available housing and cost of rents and home ownership so high right now, it's time for a bit of good news!

William Hanly Apartments Incorporated has purchased the former Tradition Insurance building on Queen St. in St. Marys. Three people supported by Community Living St. Marys have lived in the tri-plex for a number of years. When the private landlord decided to put the property up for sale in the spring of 2022 it seemed like the best solution to ensure the security and affordability of the tenants was to buy the property.

What is William Hanly Apartments Incorporated or WHA as it's often called? In the early 1980s, Community Living St. Marys was beginning to support more people to move out of their family homes or to move back to St. Marys from large institutions. It was challenging to find places to live so the Board set up a separate housing corporation in Dec 1981 and named it after a volunteer and benefactor, Bill Hanly. They also purchased two apartment buildings, one of which was 111 Queen St. The Board had a very clear vision at that time as it does now. They wanted people with disabilities to have choices of where to live and who to live with. They did not want to invest in creating group homes.

Over the years, WHA has grown and with the new addition now has six properties. Ten people supported by CLSMA and four supportive neighbours are tenants. What can WHA do in the future? The Board has and will continue to plan for how WHA can be used to spark innovative housing options for people with disabilities in our community. If you have any ideas about creative housing or partnerships please contact Jennifer Leslie jleslie@clstmarys.ca

New Executive Director

Getting to Know our new Executive Director!

Most everyone already knows this smiling face is Becky Huffman and that she will become the new Executive Director at CLSMA on November 14, 2022. However, there is a lot you probably don't know about Becky.

- Becky started working at CLSMA as a summer student worker in May 2009 and came back over the next couple of summers until she graduated from the University of Guelph in 2011. She then continued as a relief support worker until 2015.
- She has worked in the for-profit business world as a Quality Assurance Manager for a food processing plant and also in the human service sector. She was involved with Victim Services Bruce Grey Perth for five years, first as a volunteer and then was hired as the Program Coordinator. Both perspectives taught her a lot about the struggles that organizations face in the non-profit sector. The focus at Victim Services was how to continue providing efficient, effective support to the community despite facing many barriers including a lack of resources. She needed to wear many hats in that role from recruiting, training and supporting volunteers to leading workshops, fundraising, offering group counselling and doing the one to one support to community members experiencing crisis situations.



Becky returned to her roots at CLSMA as a Team Leader first and then was hired as a Manager with Support Services in November 2019.

Becky loves to travel and has already visited 29 different countries. She plans on making this 30 very soon with a trip planned early in 2023. When asked what her favourite country is, she doesn't like to pick one because each one is so unique and wonderful in its own way. This is the reason she keeps traveling. One of her top picks is Ireland, where she's been twice, because her Grandmother was born there and she loves exploring her Irish roots. She also loves visiting various MLB baseball stadiums with her partner Matt and they've already been to 12 of the 30 stadiums. Almost halfway there Becky!

And one last fact; Becky was born and raised in Stratford and although she has been living in New Hamburg for seven years, is happy to be moving back to her hometown in mid October.

Becky's core gift makes her a great fit for her new role as Executive Director;

My core gift is helping others set the stage to reach their full potential I do this by following my instincts and emotional compass and by listening and learning about people through a lens of curiosity, kindness and compassion.

We are pleased to announce that two internal candidates, **Brandon Finnie** and **Carly Geiger**, have each accepted a contract Team Leader position with CLSMA to cover two upcoming maternity leaves. Brandon and Carly each bring their own gifts to the role and clearly demonstrate CLSMA's vision, mission and principles.



We are also excited (and sad) for **Linda Pickering** who has announced her retirement effective late January 2023. Linda has been a Team Leader with our agency for the past sixteen years. We wish her all the best in this next chapter and are happy to share that she will remain connected to CLSMA through some relief work and will continue on as the CPI trainer.



Scheduler

As the agency looks ahead to the future, with the many upcoming changes, we are happy to announce that a new position of Scheduler will be posted. This new position will allow Team Leaders to have a greater focus on coaching, mentoring and leadership within teams that will enhance the lives of the people receiving supports. This new position will begin as a one year contract, and will backfill one of the Team Leader vacancies, to allow us time to measure its need, efficacy and success.

Ever considered being a mentor? Mentors provide guidance, assistance and comfort to newer employees.



CLSMA has been developing a mentorship program over the past few years, and are seeking to add even more mentors who have long-term experience, patience, and who fully understand our values of support that we provide at CLSMA. Mentors are required to commit to a

6 month partnership. If you think you might be interested in mentoring a new employee, please contact Laura (lcannon@clstmarys.ca) for more information. It's a great way to meet new people, foster relationships, and share the immense knowledge of our more experienced support workers!

3 December
International Day of Persons with Disabilities

take action disability-inclusion
women with disabilities understanding disability mobilize action
promote dignity plan events mainstream disability
organize forums ensure equality
develop social policies employment inclusive education
social integration advocate human rights
children with disabilities **empowerment**
accessible healthcare
data collection **awareness-raising**
end stigma and stereotyping

Be informed. Get involved!
www.un.org/disabilities
enable@un.org

Summer Support

It is hard to believe another summer has come and gone! Community Living St. Marys and Area employed four summer support workers who supported many youth in our community. Thank you, Sophia, Caelan, Adam, and Kayla for your dedication over the summer. Our focus this summer was to create some great memories and have fun by assisting the youth to get back out into their community while making new community connections. Many of the youth have worked very hard on their personal goals this summer. These goals ranged from improving their physical fitness, visiting with friends, building new skills, volunteering and gaining their first paid employment! Employment with the youth was very successful and we aim to continue to build on this next summer by working closely with our Employment Facilitator.



Include2Improve is a group of high school aged youth who meet regularly. The group has a ton of fun and great conversations. Together they work on community projects. If you know of any youth that are interested in joining this group, please share our contact information.

Voices Perth is facilitating an in person 4 Week Internet Safety Workshop Series for youth with disabilities between the ages of 15 and 25 years starting at the end of October. Please reach out to Amanda Brown at abrown@clstmarys.ca or 519-284-1400 ext. 226 if you are interested in registering a loved one.



Employee Management Relations Committee

Provides a forum for discussion for all staff through their representative for matters of mutual interest and/or concern.

Members include:

Becky Huffman, Kim Melville,
Lisa McDonald, Jenn Costello,
Jen Leslie & Kim Monden

NEWSLETTER

If you would prefer to receive this newsletter electronically, you can sign up at our website at

www.communitylivingstmarys.ca. You may also send your email address and request to: centraladmin@clstmarys.ca

If you would like to be removed from our mailing list, please contact Candace O'Hearn at 519-284-1400 x 221 or email cohearn@clstmarys.ca

The Joint Health & Safety Committee

Items of interest, dealings of the H&S Committee and the minutes are posted at the JPC in the photocopy room. Any concerns of a health and safety nature can be forwarded to the Chair Paul Williams at pwilliams@clstmarys.ca or (519) 284-3620

Members include: Jen Leslie, Paul Williams, Jackie Doherty, John Gray, Kim Monden, and Linda Pickering

Community Dinner Volunteers Needed

The United Church in St. Marys organizes a community dinner two Mondays each month from September to June. Everyone is welcome to come for an amazing hot meal and contribute a donation if they are able to. Dinner is served in the church hall at 5pm.

Each dinner is prepared and served by a different community group or business and there are 21 separate groups involved for the 2022/23 year! Community Living St. Marys and Area is responsible for Monday December 5 and we're looking for volunteers to help with the prep, serving and clean-up. It's a fun event and many hands really do make light work! If you are interested in helping either organize or be part of the dinner please let Jennifer know at jleslie@clstmarys.ca or (519)284-1400 ext 228

